DEF 12-5 JORDAN

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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INFO RUQMBE/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 87
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 18
RUFHDN/AMEMBASSY LONDON 62
RUFHPA/AMEMBASSY PARIS 47
RUQMVL/AMEMBASSY TELAVIV 82
RUCJHK/CINCSTRIKE
STATE GRNC
BT
S E C R E T SEONE OFTWO NOVEMBER 30

CINCSTRIKE FOR POLAD

DEPTELS 219 AND 246 - SUPERSONICS FOR JORDAN.

1. MAJOR GENERAL AMER KHAMMASH RETURNED AMMAN FROM TRIP PARIS/LONDON LATE NOVEMBER 27. FOLLOWING WHAT WE UNDERSTAND INFORMALLY TO HAVE BEEN SERIES LONG DISCUSSIONS OVER WEEKEND, INVOLVING KING, TOP ARMY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PRIME MINISTER TELL AND COURT MINISTER SAID JUMA SENT FOR ME NOVEMBER 30 TO DISCUSS FRANKLY ON BEHALF OF KING AND GOJ WHERE THEY STOOD ON PROBLEM OF ACQUIRING SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT.

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(CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE BEFORE RECEIPT SECOND REFTEL BUT I BELIEVE CONVERSATION REPORTED BELOW ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH THAT INSTRUCTION.)

2. TELL SAID KHAMMASH HAD RECEIVED LATEST OFFERS FROM BRITISH AND FRENCH, THAT FRENCH WAS MUCH BETTER THAN BRITISH IN TERMS OF PRICE, INTEREST AND DOWNPAYMENT (SEE NJA 6234 FOR DETAILS OF TWO OFFERS AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM), AND THAT GOJ PRACTICALLY READY SIGN AGREEMENT WITH GOF BUT THERE WAS STILL FINANCIAL GAP BETWEEN AVAILABLE UAC FUNDS AND BEST WESTERN OFFER RECEIVED AND THEY NEEDED USG "BLESSING" ON DEAL BEFORE THEY COULD SIGN CONTRACT.

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3. REPLIED I WANTED REVIEW BRIEFLY HISTORY OUR DISCUSSIONS ON SUPERSONICS. REMINDED HIM OF CONVERSATIONS WITH ASST SECY TALBOT LAST FEBRUARY WHEN WE HAD URGED THEM NOT TO PRESS FOR 104S BUT TO SEEK WESTERN EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT INSTEAD. HUSSEIN HAD SUBSEQUENTLY DISCUSSED THIS WITH NASSER AND HAD THEN WITHDRAWN REQUEST FOR US PLANES AND INSTEAD ASKED FOR OUR HELP WITH WESTERN EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS.

4. THAT HELP HAD BEEN PROMISED AND HAD BEEN GIVEN. AT VERY HIGH LEVELS WE HAD URGED FRENCH TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS

POSSIBLE. WHEN IN SEPTEMBER WE LEARNED HOW HIGH PRICE WAS WE HAD DISCUSSED PROBLEM WITH BRITISH AND EVEN WORKED OUT PACKAGE DEAL TO INCLUDE HAWKS IN EFFORT BRING COST DOWN TO AVAILABLE FUNDS. THERE HAD NEVER BEEN ANY OFFER OF US FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND AS I HAD WARNED HIM BEFORE IT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS THAT COUNTRY WITH OUR BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM COULD NOT SUBSIDIZE PURCHASE THIRD COUNTRY AIRCRAFT.

5. TELL SAID HE WAS AFRAID THIS WOULD BE MY ANSWER AND THEREFORE IN REVIEWING ENTIRE MATTER THEY HAD COME DOWN IN FAVOR OF US AIRCRAFT AND WANTED TO RENEW EARLIER REQUEST. RE FEBRUARY TALKS HE SAID IT DID NOT BOTHER HIM IF THIS MEANT SELLING COMPARABLE AIRCRAFT TO ISRAEL SINCE ALTERNATIVES WERE ALL IMPOSSIBLE. I SAID I WAS WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS BUT I KNEW OF NOTHING WHICH IN ANY WAY ALTERED POSITION SET FORTH PREVIOUSLY ON SALE OF US AIRCRAFT.

6. TELL THEN ASKED WHAT I AS FRIEND SUGGESTED AS NEXT STEP. I REPLIED THAT IN FIRST INSTANCE I THOUGHT THEY SHOULD GO BACK TO UAC, POINT OUT JORDAN BY NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH USG COULD NOT ACCEPT MIGS, THAT AVAILABLE WESTERN PLANES MORE EXPENSIVE, AND INSIST JORDAN BE GIVEN MORE MONEY OR

ALLOWED TO BUY FEWER PLANES WITH PRESENT FUNDS. TELL SAID THIS HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE TO EXTENT POSSIBLE. HE WANTED TO REMIND US THAT ORIGINAL DECISION HAD BEEN FOR THREE SQUADRONS OF 20 PLANES EACH AT 6.5 MILLION POUNDS PER SQUADRON. AT CASABLANCA THEY HAD GOTTEN THIS REDUCED FROM 60 TO 36 PLANES (4 OF WHICH WOULD BE TRAINERS) BUT HAD KEPT ARAB CONTRIBUTION AT 19.5 MILLION POUNDS. THIS ALREADY MAJOR CONCESSION TO OUR POINT OF VIEW.

7. FURTHER, HE THOUGHT WE HAD FORGOTTEN THAT IT NOT UAC BUT CONFERENCE OF ARAB LEADERS WHO MADE THESE DECISIONS. JORDANIAN REQUIREMENT FOR 36 PLANES HAD BEEN VOTED BY ARAB LEADERS AND FUNDS HAD BEEN ALLOCATED BY ARAB LEADERS. UAC COULD NOT CHANGE OR MODIFY THESE DECISIONS BUT ONLY SEEK TO IMPLEMENT THEM. I THEN ASKED IF HE WAS SURE MIG PACKAGE ENTIRELY COMPARABLE TO MIRAGE PACKAGE AND THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR ADJUSTMENT OF FUNDS ON THIS BASIS. HE SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED TWO OFFERS WERE IDENTICAL IN TERMS NUMBER OF PLANES, SPARES, MISSILES, ETC., BUT MIG PRICE MUCH LESS.

8. I NOTED THAT PRICE WAS POLITICAL AND HE HAD TO WEIGH CAREFULLY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RISKS INVOLVED. I

HOPED HE WAS NOT TRYING TO PAVE WAY FOR ACCEPTANCE OF MIGS BECAUSE, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I HAD TO WARN HIM OF IMPLICATIONS OF THAT ACTION. ACCEPTANCE OF MIGS WOULD IN ALL PROBABILITY CANCEL GROUND FORCE PACKAGE AND AT VERY LEAST ENDANGER BUDGET SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT LENDING, COST OF WHICH TO JORDAN COULD QUICKLY AMOUNT TO FAR MORE THAN DIFFERENCE IN PRICE ON AIRCRAFT.

9. PRIME MINISTER SAID HE NOT IN ANY WAY TRYING PAVE WAY FOR ACCEPTANCE OF MIGS, WHICH HE, JUMA, SHARIF NASSER AND KING AMONG OTHERS WOULD ALL OPPOSE TO BEST OF ABILITY. HE AWARE OF GRAVE CONSEQUENCES VIS-A-VIS USG, WHICH WAS WHY HE WISHED DISCUSS PROBLEM WITH US IN DETAIL. ALSO AWARE OF TRAGEDY INVOLVED IN SUCH EXPENDITURES, SINCE FUNDS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MORE IMPORTANT IN LONG RUN, BUT THERE WERE CERTAIN FACTS OF LIFE WHICH HAD TO BE FACED. HE WANTED BE SURE WE RECOGNIZED THESE.

GP-3. BARNES

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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CINCSTRIKE FOR POLAD

10. FIRST THERE WAS NEED WHICH WE OURSELVES HAD RECOGNIZED TO MODERNIZE JORDAN AIRFORCE AND OBVIOUS REQUIREMENT UNDER EXISTING POLITICAL CONDITIONS THAT JORDAN HAVE AIRFORCE. ON THIS GENERAL PROPOSITION AND EARLIER DISCUSSIONS WITH US WHICH LED KING TO FEEL HOPEFUL, KING HAD COMMITTED HIMSELF TO OTHER ARAB LEADERS AT CASABLANCA THAT HE WOULD ACQUIRE AIRPLANES. KING TOOK THIS COMMITMENT SERIOUSLY AND NOBODY IN PRESENT GOVERNMENT PREPARED DISMISS IT AS NON-EXISTENT. APPEALING TO UAC WOULD NOT ALTER

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COMMITMENT UNDERTAKEN AT ARAB SUMMIT.

11. SECOND HE HOPED WE REALIZED UAC WAS TODAY STABILIZING FORCE IN ARAB WORLD. CASABLANCA CONFERENCE HAD BEEN MOST MODERATE PERFORMANCE OF ARABS TO DATE AND UAC OPERATING IN ACCORDANCE INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED. VERY MODERATENESS OF DECISIONS HAD TENDED AROUSE EXTREMISTS IN AREA AND GIVE TREND TOWARD MILITANT ACTION NEW IMPETOUS. FATAH AND SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS WERE EXAMPLE TO WHICH ONE COULD NOW ADD SHUQAIRY AND SOME OF PLO. THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT GROWIN THREAT THAT ISRAEL MIGHT ACQUIRE ATOM BOMB AND NEED TO ATTACK BEFORE IT TOO LATE.

12. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES UAC AND DECISIONS OF ARAB LEADERS MOST IMPORTANT RESTRAINING INFLUENCE LEFT. WE

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KNEW AIRPLANES PROVIDED JORDAN WOULD NEVER BE USED FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSES, BUT IF JORDAN NOW ACCUSED OF FAILURE CARRY OUT MINIMUM UAC REQUIREMENTS, HE FEARED THERE WOULD BE ALMOST NO HOPE OF RESTRAINING EXTREMISTS. GOJ DOING ITS UTMOST ON THIS BUT NEEDED FULL UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION FROM US.

13. TELL CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE FULLY RECOGNIZED ISSUES INVOLVED TODAY COULD WELL RESHAPE FUTURE OF MIDDLE EAST

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AND DETERMINE PATTERN OF US-JORDAN RELATIONS. ISSUES SO FUNDAMENTAL THAT, WITH DUE RESPECT TO EMBASSY, HE WANTED PERMISSION SEND SA'D JUMA AND AMER KHAMMASH TO WASHINGTON FOR VERY FRANK DISCUSSIONS. I SAID I WOULD HAVE TO REFER REQUEST TO WASHINGTON WHICH CONSTANTLY FACED WITH STREAM OF FOREIGN VISITORS. TELL SAID HE REALIZED THIS BUT URGED THAT I SEEK AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER SINCE "WE CAN NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH LESS" IN VIEW OF GRAVE IMPLICATIONS OF PRESENT PROBLEM.

14. COMMENT: CONVERSATION, WHICH REPORTED IN COMPLETE CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY, WAS FRIENDLY AND PLEASANT, THOUGH UNDERLINED WITH DEEP SERIOUSNESS AND ANXIETY WHICH THEY FELT. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WE URGE THAT WASHINGTON ACCEPT VISIT OF JUMA AND KHAMMASH. WHATEVER IS SAID TO THEM, IT WILL BE MORE PALLIABLE HERE BECAUSE THEY HAD OPPORTUNITY AT FIRST HAND TO DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS OF AIRPLANE ISSUE.

GP-3. BARNES
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